going on in the past did not contain valuable tree-growth and they might, with advantage to the State and benefit to the people, be assigned on suitable terms and conditions for paddy cultivation. The pressure on land, which was now great, especially in the western pakuthies of the taluk, would be relieved thereby. The Member suggested that the portion of the Rani Reserve lying north of Azhuthayar might be disafforested and made available to the people under such conditions and safeguards as would ensure their equitable distribution and proper utilisation. The tract lay close to the inhabited portion of the Kanjirapalli and Manimala pakuthies and is surrounded on the north, west and east by cultivated lands. Further, it was devoid of tree-growth of any value and was eminently suited for paddy cultivation. The Member suggested the appointment of a Committee consisting of the Devicolam Commissioner, the Director of Agriculture, the Conservator of Forests and two or three non-official gentlemen to investigate the matter and report to Government.

Dewan's reply.—I must say that there is a good deal of force in the arguments brought forward in support of the first proposition. But the question will have to be investigated carefully before a final decision can be arrived at. Whether Peermade should be split up into two taluks or whether, with a readjustment without increasing the number of taluks, we can separate the plain pakuthies from the hill pakuthies of the taluk,—these are questions which have to be looked into carefully. All that I can tell Mr. Thomas now is that I shall look into the question very carefully.

In regard to the creation of additional facilities for paddy cultivation, I am not prepared to dogmatise to the same extent as Mr. Thomas has done. He says that forest conservancy has been pushed to the detriment of other interests. I am told, that for the last 3 or 4 years, there has been no additional conservation worth the name. On the contrary a large area has been disafforested and made available for cultivation. In regard to Rani, I am told that all large dips where paddy cultivation can be carried on profitably have already been thrown out for cultivation ; there may still be within the reserves small swamps where paddy can be grown, but everybody will concede that the disafforestation of such small areas within reserves is altogether detrimental to forest interests. As for cherikkal cultivation to which Mr. Thomas referred, this is done on the slopes by removing tree-growth. Whether encouragement should be given to this form of cultivation is a matter for Government to consider. As regards the last representation that a Committee should be constituted to go into the question as to whether it is feasible to throw open additional areas from the Rani reserve for paddy cultivation, I may say that this will receive my attention.

18. Shifting of the Division Cutcherry from Kottayam and its location in any of the central taluks of the Division.

Mr. Vasudevar Trivikramar Nambutiri (Member, Jenmi, Kottayam Division) pointed out that the head-quarters of a Division should be at a place easily accessible to the majority of the taluks in that Division. Kottayam was conveniently situated for the three neighbouring taluks; but, in respect of the seven northern taluks, the location was not suitable as the journey involved delay, hardship and loss. Alwaye deserved to be the seat of the Dewan Peishkar for the following reasons:—

(i) Alwaye is more easily accessible from the seven taluks out of the eleven which constitute the Division.

(ii) Large sums of money will have to be spent by Government for land compensation for a site for the Division Cutcherry at Kottayam, as the price of land has risen high. At Alwaye, an area of three acres adjoining the Railway Station acquired in the past for the use of the Excise department is lying idle and may be utilised for building the Division Cutcherry. With less than the cost of the site and building at Kottayam, the Division Cutcherry and even quarters for the Peishkar and other officers can be erected at Alwaye.

(iii) Kottayam is becoming more and more crowded, and the cost of living in the town has considerably increased.

(iv) Alwaye is a sanitarium and is in every way healthier and better.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

(v) It is essential that the permanent residence of the Dewan Peishkar should be near the taluks of Kunnatnad, Muvattupuzha and Todupuzha, where there are extensive areas of puduval lands, where registries of puduvals are largely being made, where bifurcation of pakuthies is required, and where agricultural companies are working.

(vi) Government owe to the backward taluks the same duty that they are discharging in improving the condition of the depressed classes.

(vii) The Western Outlet Road connects Alwaye with Munnar and Devicolam. The importance of Alwaye will be enhanced when the Cochin Harbour becomes an accomplished fact.

(viii) The location of the Division Peishkar's Office at Alwaye would enable the affairs of the Perumanam and Kudalmanickam Devaswoms being more efficiently managed.

(ix) It would be possible to check the inroads of vagrants, criminals, &c., and prevent the importation of epidemics.

(x) It would lead to greater amity between Cochin and Travancore.

(xi) Above all, it is eminently desirable that an officer of status should be stationed at the boundary to represent the State and maintain its dignity.

In the opinion of the Member, Kottayam would not suffer by the transfer. The host of public offices and institutions left in it would keep its position unimpaired. To remove any inconvenience caused by the transfer of the Division Cutcherry, the Division Assistant at Perumpavur might be posted to Kottayam. The Member was not particular that Alwaye should be the head-quarters, and he had no objection to Muvattupuzha, the geographical centre of the Northern Division, being selected. But Alwaye possessed the superior advantages enumerated above. Though Kottayam became the head-quarters of the Division about 40 years ago, it was significant that, as yet, steps had not been taken to secure a permanent abode for the Division Cutcherry. That would go to prove that, from the first, Government had no intention to stick to Kottayam permanently.

Dewan's reply.—The Member's representation will be considered.

(2) Forest.

19. Desirability of introducing certain changes in the Forest Regulation, especially in regard to the claims of the holders of registered lands to the royal trees standing on them.

Mr. Kanakku Thevan Raman (Member, Kottarakara Taluk) dwelt on the provision in the Forest Rules dated the 1st Meenam 1088, for the payment, by way of *kudivila*, of one-half of the value of royal trees on private lands, to the owners thereof. He said that the right to *kudivila* had been restricted by the judgment of the High Court in A. S. No. 16 of 1094, to royal trees on lands brought under registry prior to 1068 M. E., the year in which the Forest Regulation came into force. That judgment proceeded mainly on the Sirkar's contention in the case that the claim could not be recognised in regard to trees on lands registered subsequent to 1068. Great hardship had been caused by the judgment. In the first place, the judgment denied a right long recognised and established. Secondly, it was common knowledge that the existence of royal trees was a hindrance to the profitable cultivation of food grains and fruit trees. But the lands on which they grew were not on that account tax-free and the owners of such lands could not get any return for the *tharavila* and assessment paid by them, until the trees were felled and removed. The Member therefore prayed that orders be issued for the payment of *kudivila* under the Rules in all cases.

Dewan's reply.—All these points have been already raised by other Members and have been replied to.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly